

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 265067

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DACCA NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 265067

NODIS

E.O. 11652:XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG

SUBJECT: MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY ON BANGLADESH

1. THE AMBASSADOR SHOULD DELIVER THE FOLLOWING LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN OR FOREIGN SECRETARY KEWAL SINGH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND SEEK HIGH LEVEL INDIAN ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION IN BANGLADESH. PARALLEL INSTRUCTIONS ARE BEING SENT TO DACCA ON HOW WE WISH TO RESPOND TO THE APPROACH BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BDG FOR SUPPORT AGAINST POSSIBLE INDIAN INTERVENTION.

2. QUOTE. DEAR MR. MINISTER: IN LINE WITH OUR AGREEMENT DURING OUR TALKS LAST MONTH THAT WE CONTINUE A FRANK BUT PRIVATE DIALOGUE, I AM WRITING YOU REGARDING THE SITUATION IN BANGLADESH. GIVEN INDIA'S CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THAT COUNTRY, I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE DISTURBED STATE OF AFFAIRS THERE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 265067

3. EVENTS HAVE BEEN MOVING SO RAPIDLY DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS THAT IT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT FOR US TO KEEP ABREAST OF THE SITUATION. OUR BASIC POSITION, HOWEVER, REMAINS EXACTLY AS I OUTLINED TO YOU IN WASHINGTON, NAMELY THAT BANGLADESH SHOULD CONCENTRATE ITS FULL ATTENTION ON ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASKS, SHOULD AVOID GETTING ENTANGLED

IN SOME COMPLEX AND FRUITLESS BALANCE OF POWER GAME AND SHOULD MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDIA. WE HAVE EXPRESSED THIS VIEW CONSISTENTLY IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE VARIOUS AUTHORITIES WHO HAVE HELD POWER IN DACCA SINCE THE TRAGIC DEMISE OF SHEIKH MUJIB. WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE OUR INFLUENCE IN BANGLADESH TO THIS END.

4. WE HOPE THAT THE SITUATION IN BANGLADESH WILL STABILIZE QUICKLY SO THAT INSECURITY AND UNCERTAINTY THERE DO NOT POSE A THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF FOREIGNERS OR TO THE HINDU MINORITY. I KNOW FIRST-HAND FROM OUR TALKS OF YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING THE SECURITY OF THE HINDU POPULATION. WE ARE CONVEYING OUR VIEWS ON THIS TO THE AUTHORITIES IN DACCA. I AM ALSO SURE THAT INDIA AGREES THAT IT WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DETRIMENTAL TO THE LONG-TERM PROSPECTS FOR SUBCONTINENTAL NORMALIZATION AND STABILITY WERE EXTERNAL POWERS TO ENGAGE THEMSELVES IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF BANGLADESH. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT EVENTS OF THE PAST WEEK HAVE PRIMARILY INVOLVED A STRUGGLE FOR POWER WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE MILITARY AND THAT BANGLADESH'S COMMITMENT TO GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT AND GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS NEED NOT BE AFFECTED.

5. IN KEEPING WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS LIKE THIS THROUGH PRIVATE DIALOGUE, WE HAVE REFRAINED FROM ANY PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE BANGLADESH SITUATION. THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH HAVE HAD MORE THAN THEIR SHARE OF SUFFERING AND WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT RECENT EVENTS WILL SHORTLY RUN THEIR COURSE AND PERMIT POLITICAL STABILITY TO RETURN TO THAT TROUBLED LAND. SINCERELY, HENRY A. KISSINGER. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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